

IN THE CLAIMS:

A complete listing of the claims is set forth below. Please amend the claims as follows:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A computer-implemented communications exchange using one or more computer systems for facilitating communication among a plurality of supply chain participants in an electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions, comprising:

a communication interface operable to send and receive messages among the plurality of supply chain participants in the electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions;

an event container connected to the communication interface and operable to receive messages from the communication interface as events, one or more of the messages and their corresponding events each being associated with one or more marketplace transactions;

a condition container connected to the event container, the condition container comprising a plurality of condition instances each specifying one or more rules for determining whether to initiate an action defined by an action instance associated with the condition instance, a particular condition instance specifying whether to initiate the action defined in the associated action instance to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace; and

an action container connected to the condition container and containing a plurality of action instances, each action instance associated with one or more of the condition instances and defining an action operable to, when initiated, facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace;

when one or more events received by the event container from the communication interface are determined to match a predicate of a particular condition instance, the action, defined in the action instance associated with the particular condition instance, is initiated by the communications exchange to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions associated with the one or more events determined to match the predicate of the particular condition instance,

wherein at least one of the condition instances specifies at least one rule requiring the presence of a specified plurality of specified events in the event container for initiating a specified one of the action instances in the action container,

wherein each event is defined to expire within a respective selected time period if unused, and

wherein each specified event is stored in the event container only until ~~a first~~ one of the following occurs:

the condition instance initiating the specified ~~event or~~ event, or
expiration of the specified event.

2. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, wherein the event container comprises a timer operable to generate events related to time.

3. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, operable to:
interpret the condition instances at run time; and
change the condition instances in response to user input while the exchange is operating without disrupting processing of events.

4. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, wherein at least one of the plurality of action instances is operable to generate a new event when the action defined by the action instance is initiated, the new event being sent to the event container.

5. **(Currently Amended)** A communication system for facilitating communication among a plurality of supply chain participants in an electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions, comprising:

a communications exchange for facilitating the communication among the plurality of supply chain participants in the electronic market place to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions, the exchange in communication with the plurality of supply chain participants and comprising:

a communication interface operable to send and receive messages among the plurality of supply chain participants in the electronic marketplace to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions;

an event container connected to the communication interface and operable to

receive messages from the communication interface as events, one or more of the messages and their corresponding events each being associated with one or more marketplace transactions;

a condition container connected to the event container, the condition container comprising a plurality of condition instances each specifying one or more rules for determining whether to initiate an action associated with an action instance associated with the condition instance, a particular condition instance specifying whether to initiate the action defined in the associated action instance to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace; and

an action container connected to the condition container and containing a plurality of action instances, each action instance associated with one or more of the condition instances and defining an action operable to, when initiated, facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace;

when one or more events received by the event container from the communication interface are determined to match a predicate of a particular condition instance, the action, defined in the action instance associated with the particular condition instance, is initiated by the communications exchange to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions associated with the one or more events determined to match the predicate of the particular condition instance,

wherein at least one of the condition instances specifies at least one rule requiring the presence of a specified plurality of specified events in the event container for initiating a specified one of the action instances in the action container,

wherein each event is defined to expire within a respective selected time period if unused,

wherein each specified event is stored in the event container only until a first one of the following occurs:

the condition instance initiating the specified ~~event or~~ event, or
expiration of the specified event;

in response to input from a user, the communications exchange operable to dynamically modify a specified condition in the condition container independent of events in the event container and actions in the action container; and

in response to input from the user, the communications exchange operable to dynamically modify a specified action in the action container independent of events in the event container and conditions in the condition container.

6. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein the event container of the communications exchange comprises a timer operable to generate events related to time.

7. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein the exchange is operable to:

interpret the condition instances at run time; and
change the condition instances in response to user input while the exchange is operating without disrupting processing of events.

8. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein at least one of the plurality of action instances is operable to generate a new event when the action defined by the action instance is initiated, the new event being sent to the event container.

9. **(Currently Amended)** A computer-implemented method for using one or more computer systems for facilitating communication among a plurality of supply chain participants in an electronic marketplace to facilitate one or more marketplace transactions, comprising:

providing a plurality of condition instances each associated with one or more events and specifying one or more rules for determining whether to initiate an action defined in an action instance associated with the condition instance, each action instance being associated with one or more of the condition instances and defining an action, a particular condition instance specifying whether to perform an action defined in the action instance associated with the particular condition instance, the action defined by the action instance associated with the particular condition instance operable to, when initiated, facilitate one or more marketplace transactions in the electronic marketplace;

receiving a plurality of messages, each message being treated as an event, one or more of the messages and their corresponding events each being associated with one or more marketplace transactions, the plurality of messages being stored in an event

container;

determining whether the particular condition instance is satisfied by determining whether one or more of the messages received as events matches the predicate of the particular condition instance; and

if it is determined that one or more messages received as events satisfies the particular condition instance, initiating the action defined in the action instance associated with the particular condition instance to facilitate the one or more marketplace transactions associated with the one or more events determined to match the predicate of the particular condition instance in the electronic marketplace,

wherein at least one of the condition instances specifies at least one rule requiring the presence of a specified plurality of specified events in the event container for initiating a specified one of the action instances ,

wherein each event is defined to expire within a respective selected time period if unused, and

wherein each specified event is stored in the event container only until ~~a first~~ one of the following occurs:

the condition instance initiating the specified event ~~or event~~, or
expiration of the specified event.

10. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, further comprising:
generating timing events; and
determining that one or more messages interpreted as events satisfies the condition using at least one timing event combined with an event which is not a timing event.

11. **(Original)** The method of Claim 9, wherein the conditions are interpreted at run time, whereby changes to the conditions can be made while a computer system is executing.

12. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, wherein:
the condition is associated with more than one action; and

if it is determined that one or more messages interpreted as events satisfies the condition, initiating the more than one actions associated with the condition.

13. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, wherein the messages sent and received by the communications interface comprise one or more of:

- a request for a quote;
- a quote;
- shipping information;
- product availability information;
- delivery information; and
- a firm order.

14. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, wherein the electronic marketplace comprises one or more of:

- customers;
- resellers;
- suppliers;
- manufacturers; and
- logistics providers.

15. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, operable to:
receive definitions of condition instances from supply chain participants of the exchange; and

associate the definitions of condition instances with the condition container such that the supply chain participants of the exchange may delegate certain decisions to the exchange.

16. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a supply chain participant.

17. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by particular action contained in the action container.

18. **(Previously Presented)** The exchange of Claim 1, wherein:
in response to input from a user, the communications exchange is operable to dynamically modify a specified condition in the condition container independent of events in the event container and actions in the action container; and

in response to input from the user, the communications exchange is operable to dynamically modify a specified action in the action container independent of events in the event container and conditions in the condition container.

19. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein the messages sent and received by the communications interface comprise one or more of:

- a request for a quote;
- a quote;
- shipping information;
- product availability information;
- delivery information; and
- a firm order.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein the electronic marketplace comprises one or more of:

- customers;
- resellers;
- suppliers;
- manufacturers; and
- logistics providers.

21. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein the exchange is operable to:

receive definitions of condition instances from supply chain participants of the exchange; and

associate the definitions of condition instances with the condition container such that the supply chain participants of the exchange may delegate certain decisions to the exchange.

22. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a supply chain participant.

23. **(Previously Presented)** The system of Claim 5, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a particular action contained in the action container.

24. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, wherein the messages sent and received by the communications interface comprise one or more of:

- a request for a quote;
- a quote;
- shipping information;
- product availability information;
- delivery information; and
- a firm order.

25. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, wherein the electronic marketplace comprises one or more of:

- customers;
- resellers;
- suppliers;
- manufacturers; and
- logistics providers.

26. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, wherein providing a plurality of conditions comprises:

- receiving definitions of condition instances from supply chain participants of the exchange; and

- associating the definitions of condition instances with the condition container such that the supply chain participants of the exchange may delegate certain decisions to the exchange.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a supply chain participant.

28. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, wherein one or more of the messages are initiated by a particular action contained in the action container.

29. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 9, wherein:
in response to input from a user, dynamically modifying a specified condition independent of events associated with the specified condition and actions associated with the condition; and

in response to input from the user, dynamically modifying a specified action independent of events associated with the action and conditions associated with the action.